

## CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Big Flat Electric Co-op Inc. buried power line	Proposed Implementation Date: 11/1/12
Proponent: Big Flat Electric Co-op-Inc.	
Type and Purpose of action: Big Flat Electric is proposing to install a power line by knifing the cable below ground to a depth of 42".	
Location: S36 T 24 N Range 31 E½	County: Valley

### I. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED: Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.	DEQ, MFSA  The Big Flat Electric Co-op Inc. submitted application to install a new overhead power line across surface lands that the State owns. The APF contacted Helena staff and the decision was made to issue an emergency construction permit.
2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:	The purpose of the construction of this power line is to supply power to a yurt camp located to the south of the State land.
3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:	Grant permission for the Big Flat Electric Co-Op to install the buried power line. Deny permission for Big Flat Electric to install the buried power line.

### II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS
N = Not Present or No Impact will occur. Y = Impacts may occur (explain below)	
4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE: Are fragile, compactible or unstable soils present? Are there unusual geologic features? Are there special reclamation considerations?	General Discussion: The proposed project will take place on a wide array of soil quality, stability and moisture conditions. For the most part, disturbance to the geology and soil quality will be minimal. The buried power line will only disturb the soil and geology profile where the knife cuts the profile and where the wheel tracts are.  <b>Action:</b> The construction of the power line will have minimal impacts on the soils and geology of the state tracts that will be crossed.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
	<b>No-Action:</b> There will be no impacts to these attributes of the landscape.
5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION: Are important surface or groundwater resources present? Is there potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality?	The proposed action will not cross any surface or subsurface water sources. <b>Action:</b> The power line installation is not anticipated to impact these attributes. <b>No-Action:</b> The power line will not constructed.
6. AIR QUALITY: Will pollutants or particulate be produced? Is the project influenced by air quality regulations or zones (Class I airshed)?	The proposed area is generally considered to be a clean air quality environment. <b>Action:</b> No impacts are anticipated on the quality of air quality. <b>No-Action:</b> No impacts are anticipated on the quality of air quality.
7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY: Will vegetative communities be permanently altered? Are any rare plants or cover types present?	Vegetation for this project is primarily big sagebrush <b>Action:</b> For the routes of the buried power line, the vegetative environment will be temporarily impacted. The Big sagebrush will be trampled and probable be killed in the track areas. <b>No-Action:</b> No impacts will occur to the vegetative community.
8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS: Is there substantial use of the area by important wildlife, birds or fish?	Important fish and wildlife utilize these areas. Sage grouse utilize this area heavily. <b>Action:</b> The construction of the power line will impact sage grouse by temporarily disturbing or displacing them. If installation were to occur in the spring it could detrimentally displace sage grouse from the traditional breeding grounds. <b>No-Action:</b> No impacts will occur.
9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES: Are any federally listed threatened or endangered species or identified habitat present? Any wetlands? Sensitive Species or Species of special concern?	<b>Action:</b> The construction of the power line will not impact important fish and wildlife. <b>No-Action:</b> No impacts will occur
10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: Are any historical, archaeological or paleontological resources present?	A class III inventory was done when completing the BLM and State easement application. No sites were identified within the boundaries of the State action. <b>Action:</b> No impacts will occur to State land resources. <b>No-Action:</b> No action: will take place and therefore no impacts will occur.
11. AESTHETICS: Is the project on a prominent topographic feature? Will it be visible from populated or scenic areas? Will there be excessive noise or light?	The power line will not be highly visible <b>Action:</b> The construction of the power will be visible and may be viewed as a negative aesthetical value by some people. <b>No-Action:</b> No power line will be constructed and therefore no change in aesthetics will occur.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY: Will the project use resources that are limited in the area? Are there other activities nearby that will affect the project?	No resources in this area are deemed to be limited. <b>Action:</b> The approval of the power line will assist with the transportation of oil. <b>No-Action:</b> No oil will be transported.
13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA: Are there other studies, plans or projects on this tract?	None: <b>Action:</b> The power line will not impact other studies, plans or projects. <b>No-Action:</b> The lack of construction will not affect other studies, plans or projects.
III. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION	
RESOURCE	[Y/N] POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES
14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY: Will this project add to health and safety risks in the area?	<b>Action:</b> MFSA will regulate the construction of the power line in a safe and prudent manner. <b>No-Action:</b> Power line will not be constructed with no additional safety risk.
15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION: Will the project add to or alter these activities?	<b>Action:</b> The construction of the power line will add to commercial activities in Phillips county by supplying a reliable electrical source to south Phillips County. <b>No-Action:</b> No additional commercial activities will occur.
16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT: Will the project create, move or eliminate jobs? If so, estimated number.	<b>Action:</b> Temporarily, the project will add to the local workforce. Long term, minimal workforce jobs will be created <b>No-Action:</b> No jobs will be created.
17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES: Will the project create or eliminate tax revenue?	<b>Action:</b> The project will increase trust revenues as well as county and state tax revenues. <b>No-Action:</b> No additional revenues will be created.
18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Will substantial traffic be added to existing roads? Will other services (fire protection, police, schools, etc) be needed?	<b>Action:</b> Minimal government services will be added. <b>No-Action:</b> No government services will be added.
19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS: Are there State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, etc. zoning or management plans in effect?	<b>Action:</b> The project will not impact locally adopted environmental plans and goals. <b>No-Action:</b> No action will take place resulting in the continuance of the local plans as they are today.
20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES: Are wilderness or recreational areas nearby or accessed through this tract? Is there recreational potential within the tract?	<b>Action:</b> No impacts to wildernesses or recreational activates will take place. <b>No-Action:</b> No impacts to wildernesses or recreational activates will take place.
21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?	<b>Action:</b> No alter of population will take place with this project. <b>No-Action:</b> No alter of population of addition of housing will be required.

II. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES: Is some disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities possible?	<b>Action:</b> No disruption of native or traditional lifestyles will take place. <b>No-Action:</b> No disruption of native or traditional lifestyles will take place.
23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY: Will the action cause a shift in some unique quality of the area?	<b>Action:</b> No shift in qualities will take place. <b>No-Action:</b> No shift in qualities will take place.
24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:	<b>Action:</b> No other appropriate social or economic circumstances were identified. <b>No-Action:</b>

EA Checklist Prepared By: R. Hoyt Richards /s/ Date: October 26, 2012

V. FINDING	
25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:	Action:
26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:	No significant impact
27. Need for Further Environmental Analysis:  <input type="checkbox"/> EIS <input type="checkbox"/> More Detailed EA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Further Analysis	

EA Checklist Approved By: Clive Rooney, Area Manager

/s/Clive Rooney                      October 26, 2012  
 Signature                                      Date